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Spy Chief Warns Labs of Future Soviet Threat

A counterespionage offensive led by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) will force Soviet spies in the near future to increasingly target U.S. university-based scientists and engineers for technical and military secrets, Admiral Bobby R. Inman, deputy director of the CIA, told a congressional hearing on 29 March. Inman made the remarks by way of explaining his reasons for recently proposing an increase in voluntary censorship by U.S. scientists. "The academic outflow is currently small," he told the hearing. "But it will increase if our counterespionage efforts are successful."

Currently, Inman said, only about 30 percent of the Soviet Union's intelligence gathering is done through U.S. scientists and scientific exchanges, and of that, only "a very small part of the problem" centers on scientific papers. But the problem will increase, he warned, as the United States cracks down on overt espionage. Inman's remarks were less forceful than those made at the AAAS annual meeting in January, where he warned that if the scientific community did not start policing itself, it would be hit by a "tidal wave" of popular discontent over the "hemorrhage of the nation's technologies" (*Science*, 22 January, p. 383).

The hearing was called by House science and technology subcommittee chairmen Albert Gore, Jr. (D-Tenn.) and Doug Walgren (D-Pa.) to examine the impact of the Reagan Administration's secrecy proposals on science and technology. Inman said he was not making specific recommendations but merely playing the part of a "gadfly." He urged the scientific community to come forward with the proposals on how to reduce the flow of technical information to the Soviets. Gore questioned some of Inman's statements and said the United States should avoid taking "even the first step down the road that has made Soviet science so pitiful." Inman quickly replied that he was asking for nothing of the sort.

Also testifying at the hearing was Frank Press, president of the National Academy of Sciences. Scientists' major concerns, he said, is that the proposed expansion of the scope of classified information could force some basic research not directly tied to national security out of universities that avoid classified work. "We should consider how much our security is harmed by denying government access to many of the nation's most brilliant scientists and engineers who work on university campuses," he said. He also noted that the Academy is gearing up to perform a study on the relationship between university research and national security in light of the growing concern over technology transfer.—William J. Broad